

The Story of
THE HERB FARM

HACKLEBARNEY ROAD • CHESTER • NEW JERSEY

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The Story of THE HERB FARM

by MRS. ALFRED G. KAY

This is the story of a hobby which has become a business. The germ of the idea attacked us many years ago in the garden of a friend at Haverford, Pennsylvania. As we wandered with her deep in conversation, we came upon a gathering of quite tiny beds lying below a grey stone wall. They were separated by flagstones which allowed gentle, low-growing plants to find sanctuary among their crevices.

This quiet corner was obviously a place apart, and we asked our friend its meaning.

"This is my little herb garden," she replied.

At our feet were legendary names on the neat labels, plants which we believed had their existence only on the pages of literature. Thyme, Sweet Marjoram, Hyssop, Rue and a score of others. It seems incredible now that there could ever have been a moment when we had never seen a growing herb! But there it was. We looked delightedly at them, and they returned our gaze in hopeful fashion—or so it seemed.

As we drove homeward through the dusk, one recollection vibrated with haunting, provocative insistence. Herbs—interesting, historical, useful, poetic, and apparently growable. What fun it would be to tuck an herb corner in one's kitchen garden.

In due course of events came a trip to England with the thoughts of herbs definitely uppermost in our minds. During happy and amazingly sunny weeks we motored, studied and collected. When we returned that fall, our herb garden was born.

A year or two passed while we became acquainted with the individualities, personalities and peculiarities of each herb. Then, upon a momentous day, Dr. David Fairchild, the noted plant explorer and organizer of the Plant Introduction Service, came to make us a visit, and immediately became absorbed by the herb corner. He had sought the peace of Hidden River Farm in order to finish an article on "The Mango," but mangoes and other tropical fruits faded from his consciousness as he delved into our library and made copious notes about the characteristics and uses of herbs.

Soon he was deep in experiments destined to prove how and where to dry the herbs. Fortunately for us, Dr. Fairchild had spent much time during the war studying the problem of drying vegetables, and he taught us the rudiments of this science. Circula-

tion of air, controlled temperature and complete absence of light are the essentials for the greatest success. From this beginning under his tutelage, we have developed our present drying rooms replete with forced ventilation, removable trays of fine screening, oil burning heaters, and automatic thermostats.

Next, we had to learn to use our herbs.

We have a delightful memory of Dr. Fairchild seated on a stool in our kitchen, the table before him strewn with piles of green herbs. An old, apothecary's pestle and mortar had been called into service, and David carefully crushed each herb and tasted it. Then a salad blend was made, bruising the herbs in vinegar and oil. A group stood respectfully about him including Mrs. Fairchild, some other houseguests and our assembled family. Solemnly we tasted and made pronouncements. By dinner time we were so saturated with salad dressing that we could have been placed in wooden bowls and served up ourselves.

The following spring the Herb Farm was born.

We had recently purchased some land adjoining Hidden River Farm. It contained, among other unexplored treasures, an abandoned iron mine which had been operated from pre-Revolutionary times until after the Civil War. The superintendent of the mine had lived in a charming house of homemaker brick and half-timber, and had stabled his animals in a beautiful stone barn with walls three feet thick. The house was worthless, for the roof had fallen in and the soft bricks had crumbled. But the barn, though also roofless, stood four square, shedding the weather from its massive walls.

That barn haunted me. It was far too fine to convert into a home for some unappreciative farmhand, yet surely it must not stand forever unwanted and unused.

During that winter, a Girl Scout Director in Florida said to me, "I need a summer job." Busy with other things, I murmured something about thinking it over, and several weeks later, out of the blue, so to speak, the two thoughts came together and became one "swell" idea. Herbs and a Tea Room! Why not?

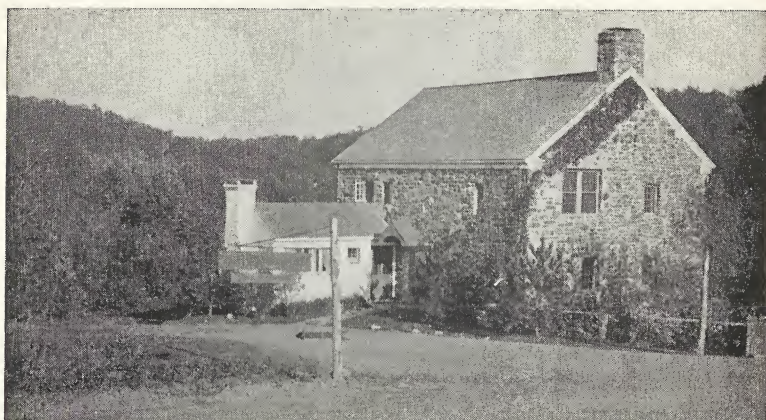
We wired for the dimensions of the barn and drew up plans for its restoration. When we returned to New Jersey in the spring, hammers and saws were sounding a symphony of new life for the old barn. A walled space at one end became a little herb garden. A clapboard wing became a kitchen; a Pennsylvania hood and door replaced the big barn door no longer needed to admit fat hay carts. A well-house, complete with moss-covered bucket, now masks an electric pump, a generous chimney rises through the barn roof from the big fireplace below.

Finally, a bridge was built across our river, and a road cut through the woods to provide a private path from Hidden River Farm to its new neighbor which had early been christened "The

Herb Farm." And, on a thrilling day, signs were hung beside the country road which skirts The Herb Farm, announcing that Luncheon, Tea and Supper might be obtained within.

In the meantime, great activity had taken place up the hill in the Herb "Laboratory" which had come into being in a sunny room of an old shingle barn near our house. Not only did we now have scientific drying rooms, but electric cutters and sifters and mixers hummed in the Lab, and rows of labeled jars stood on the ever increasing tiers of shelves.

We have discovered from our own experience that the modern cook does not know what to do with herbs even though they are presented to her on a silver platter. We therefore had set to, and



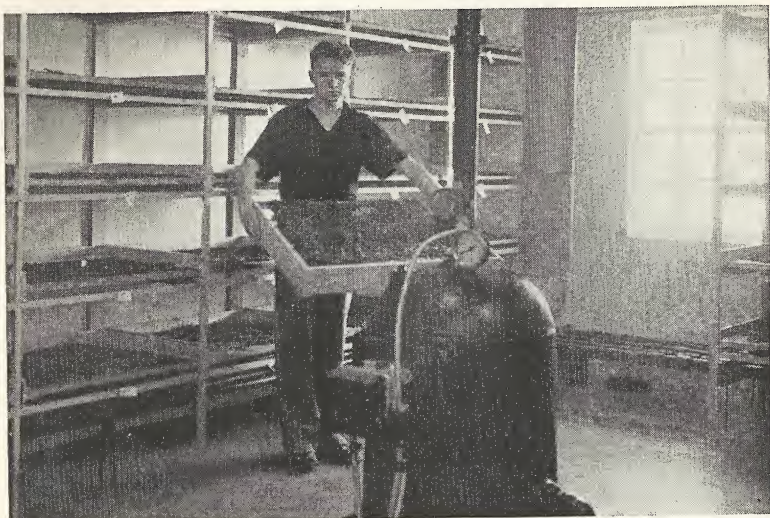
Outside View—Herb Farm Tea Room

conducted many gastronomic experiments aimed at a simplification of this problem. In short, we combined our herbs into blends suitable for various culinary purposes.

The first Law of the Chefs and the Gourmets is namely this: "Never, never shall the flavor of any one herb dominate a dish." Herbs nearly all have very definitely defined flavors which can easily become tiresome if not gently handled. Flavoring and seasoning should always be subtle. And herein lies the art of culinary skill and perfection.

From this study and experimentation have developed The Herb Farm blends for Omelette, Salad, Soups and various types of seasoning. There are a thousand happy combinations of herbs possible. Naturally we can only compass a few without defeating our purpose by confusing our customers. All that we claim is that what we sell is good—carefully grown, dried, handled, packaged. No one knows better than we that there are many other possible blends which are delicious, too!

While trying to determine the best way to put up the herbs, and how to assure a uniform product, we of course encountered numerous problems, both expected and unforeseen. It has all been great fun, and has proved a hobby which each and every member of the family can enjoy. Like much else in life, the element of luck has entered in. It has been great good fortune that the male member of the partnership happens to be a manufacturing chemist, possessing full knowledge of laboratory equipment as well as chemical lore. It has been kindergarten work for him to answer the questions as to how we might best powder the herbs and eliminate all danger of our customers finding twigs or sharp leaves



Corner of a Drying Room

in their food. He also has smoothed many other difficulties, from bookkeeping to fumigation and trade-marking the name "The Herb Farm."

From the day The Herb Farm sign hung on its cedar post, the story partakes of the miraculous. The herb-flavored food at the Tea Room was good, for the herb blends are delicious. People wandering down the country road found The Herb Farm, and went home to tell their friends and come again. When they left there, they carried jars of Herb Seasoning and bottles of Herb Vinegar.

And then there began a mail order business which threatens to rival Montgomery Ward. Last Christmas time our red and white trimmed boxes went gaily forth, to the far corners of the land—Oregon, Mexico, Alabama, Maine, California, the Dakotas, Texas, and even Japan and Honolulu.



Picking Herbs



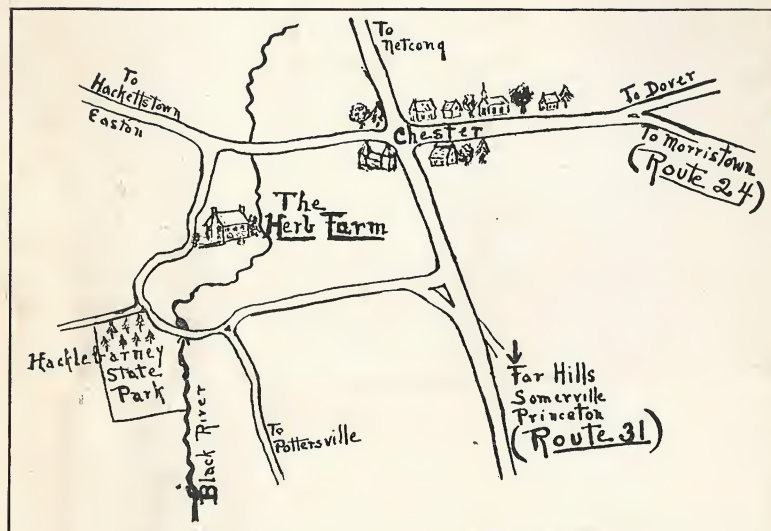
Inside View—Herb Farm Tea Room

Mary Chess, Inc., in New York City, saw our herbs and found them better than the imported ones (as they truly are) and decided that she herself was so occupied with her cosmetic business that she would offer to turn her herb trade over to us. So more herb orders streamed through the astonished post office of Chester, New Jersey, which never saw so many packages in all of its life before. Their far flung addresses make the postmaster (who is also drug clerk and telephone operator) gasp and quaver.

Next summer a greater number of our fields will grow green with rows of sage and savory, tarragon and basil, instead of wheat or corn. My dahlias have already had to step aside for mint and marjoram. Even the dog-pen has disappeared before the onslaught. Where it once stood now blossom lavender, balm, rosemary and verbenas.

Great fragrant baskets of herbs are brought to scent the drying rooms and, when dry, are carried to be sorted, cut, sifted and blended in the "Lab." Between times we are working on a cook book which we hope to publish soon, and are also writing a manuscript on Herbs and their uses.

In closing, we wish to issue an invitation to one and all. When you motor through northern New Jersey we hope that you will drop in on The Herb Farm and hear, taste and smell its herbal delights at first-hand. But be warned by what has befallen us, and, when you mount a hobby, have a care lest it carry you farther than you intend, as ours has, and invade all your waking moments.



The Herb Farm, Chester, New Jersey

We also sell jars of individual Herbs, either Cut or Powdered.

BALM	CORIANDER SEED	ROSEMARY
BASIL	DILL SEED	RUE
BAY	FENNEL	SAFFRON
BURNET	LAVENDER	SAGE
CAMOMILE	MARJORAM	SAVORY
CHERVIL	MATE YERBA	SORREL
CELERY SEED	(PARAGUAY TEA)	TARRAGON
CELERY LEAVES	MINT	THYME
CHIVES	PARSLEY	VERBENA

Our herbs are home grown and are dried in special drying rooms under controlled conditions. This assures a uniform quality and keeps them green and fresh in appearance.

WE USE AND SELL
these home grown, home prepared herbs
at our Tea Room

THE HERB FARM

Hacklebarney Road, Chester, New Jersey
(open from May until November)

Where we specialize in home-cooking delectably flavored

All orders, or requests for information, should be addressed to

MRS. ALFRED G. KAY
THE HERB FARM
CHESTER, NEW JERSEY

HERBS

are rich in vitamins, aid digestion, and
add piquancy to almost any cooking.

The secret of the successful use of herbs is SUBTLETY. One should never be conscious of the flavor of any one herb. Instead, a proper blending of herbs, used in proper amount, will add a fascinating, subtle "something" which transforms even canned food into a delectable dish. Everyone who experiments with our herbs will develop favorite combinations and receipts.

We have blended and powdered several combinations of herbs for culinary use. A pinch is generally all that is necessary in any dish. USE THE HERBS AS YOU WOULD ANY CONDIMENT.

OLD FASHIONED HERB POWDER is our most delicate blend. It may be used in many ways, including cream soups, vegetables, entrees cooked with cream sauce, egg dishes, and sprinkled over cottage cheese.

BLENDED TARRAGON SEASONING is more striking in character, and is a great favorite with our customers. It is delicious with cream soups, casserole dishes, spaghetti, creamed chicken, forcemeat and, in fact, adds interest to practically any dish. Try it in Cream of Mushroom sometime.

SPICED HERB POWDER is a blend of our garden herbs to which we have added spices from the East. This powder is particularly good with ham, squash, spinach, canned peas, and in some soups. It is also excellent as a pickling spice.

FISH COOKERY HERBS are powdered so that they may be either cooked with the fish, stirred into the sauce, or sprinkled over the completed dish. They are excellent with all kinds of seafood.

TOMATO COOKERY HERBS cannot be recommended too highly when cooked with any tomato dish. This blend is especially delicious in cream of tomato soup, tomato juice and stewed tomatoes. In order to facilitate handling, the herbs are put in individual bags suitable for the average family. Drop the bag in the pot for the last 15 minutes of cooking.

HERB BOUQUET is designed for meat stock, gravies, etc. Add a bag to your soup stock for the last hour of cooking. (Herbs become bitter if cooked *too* long). For large households we put up extra-sized bags.

OMELETTE HERBS are put up for "Omelette au fines herbes" and may also be used with creamed or scrambled eggs and chicken dishes. Mix the herbs with the eggs before cooking and add a little onion if desired.

SALAD HERBS is a combination of twelve herbs. This blend may be both beaten into the dressing and sprinkled over the salad as well.

HERB VINEGAR is delicious. It is made from fresh herbs steeped for weeks in a mild, pure vinegar.

HERB FARM SEASONING SALT is excellent general seasoning. Especially good on broiled meat or fish, potatoes and corn as well as on other foods. For meat cakes, work one teaspoonful into each pound of chopped meat.

POULTRY STUFFING HERBS are not only delicious in stuffings but are also good when cooked with stewing chickens, etc.

TEN HERB TEA. A cup of this health beverage taken upon retiring will prove beneficial as a "regulator."

HEALING SALVE. Containing only the purest ingredients, this salve is excellent for chapped lips and rough or dry skin.

EYE LOTION. Soothing, strengthening and refreshing.

Individual Herbs (Sage, Thyme, etc.) cut.....	.35	2-oz. jar
	.60	4-oz. jar
Blended and Powdered Herbs.....	.40	2-oz. jar
(Such as Salad, Omelette, etc.)	.75	4-oz. jar
Soup Bags (Herb Bouquet and Tomato Cookery)	3 jars for \$1.00, or .35 per jar	
Herbal Seasoning Salt, in glass shaker .25	} Shaker and jar together .40	
In 4-oz. jar .25		
No. 1 Assortment	{	Salad Herbs
6 small jars \$2.25		Poultry Stuffing Herbs
6 large jars \$4.00		Omelette Herbs
		Blended Tarragon Powder
		Old Fashioned Herb Powder
	{	Spiced Herb Powder or Fish Herbs
No. 2 Assortment		Tomato Cookery Herbs
6 small jars \$2.00		Herb Bouquet
6 large jars \$3.50		Salad Herbs
		Blended Tarragon Powder
	{	Old Fashioned Herb Powder
		Omelette Herbs or Fish Herbs
Herb Vinegar .50 per ½ pint.		
Ten Herb Tea .40 per jar,		Healing Salve .75 per jar.
.75 per ½ pound.		Eye Lotion .75 per bottle.

A GUIDE

to the Use of

THE HERB FARM PRODUCTS



Apple Pie
Apple Pudding { Dill Seeds sprinkled
under crust

Beans (Boston) Spiced Herb Powder or
Blended Tarragon Seasoning

Beans (Green) Pinch of Basil while cooking

Beef Herb Farm Seasoning Salt on
beefsteak or mixed in
chopped meat
Herb Bouquet bag cooked with
stew or pot roast

Cheese Dishes Blended Tarragon Seasoning
Old Fashioned Herb Powder

Chicken Dishes Use either { Poultry Stuffing
Old Fashioned Herb
Powder
Blended Tarragon
Seasoning
Spiced Herb Powder with
fricassee

Cold Slaw Salad Herbs

Corn Herb Farm Seasoning Salt

Cottage Cheese Salad Herbs mixed in or
Rue mixed in and chopped
Chives sprinkled on top

Eggs

Omelette Herbs
Blended Tarragon Powder

Fish

Fish Cookery Herbs
Herb Farm Seasoning Salt

Forcemeat

(See Beef)

Ham

Spiced Herb Powder

Hamburg Steak (See Beef)

Lamb

Herb Farm Seasoning Salt
Spiced Herb Powder

Lettuce

Fish Cookery Herbs
Spiced Herb Powder
Old Fashioned Herb Powder

Mushrooms

Blended Tarragon Powder

Mutton

(See Lamb)

Peas

With canned peas use
Spiced Herb Powder

Pork

Spiced Herb Powder
Add extra Thyme if desired

Potatoes

Herb Farm Seasoning Salt

Poultry

(See Chicken)

Rice

Blended Tarragon Powder
Old Fashioned Herb Powder

Salads

Salad Herbs

Sauces

Butter Herb Farm Seasoning Salt
Bernais and { Blended Tarragon Powder or
Hollandaise { Old Fashioned Herb Powder
Mayonnaise . . . Old Fashioned Herb Powder
White Sauce . . . Blended Tarragon Powder
Sauces to use
with Fish Fish Cookery Herbs

Soups

Beef Herb Bouquet
Chicken Consomme Poultry Stuffing Herbs
Corn Herb Farm Seasoning Salt
Cream of Chicken { Poultry Stuffing Herbs or
Blended Tarragon Powder
Cream of Tomato Tomato Cookery Herbs
Cream of Mushroom Blended Tarragon Powder
Pea Spiced Herb Powder
Rosemary . . . { Add touch of
Blended Tarragon Powder
Vegetable Soup . . Tomato Cookery Herbs

Spaghetti

Blended Tarragon Powder
Old Fashioned Herb Powder

Spinach

Spiced Herb Powder

Squash

Spiced Herb Powder

Veal

Spiced Herb Powder